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The fauna of British India, including Ceylon and Burma

London, Taylor and Francis; [etc., etc.], 1889-98

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occiput, the grey feathers partly concealing a nuchal black patch; white supercilia, meeting behind the nape, and bordered throughout beneath by a black band running from one eye to the other; lores and chin creamy white, sides of face buff; upper parts generally rufous buff; primary-coverts and primaries black, secondaries blackish on the inner webs, tipped with white and bordered externally with rufous buff, which gradually grows broader on the inner feathers; tail-feathers like back, all, except the median pair (which have sometimes a subterminal black spot), with a subterminal black band and white tip; lower parts buff, paler and less rufous than the back; lower abdomen and under tail-coverts white; wing-lining and axillaries black.

Young birds sandy, with many black bands throughout, paler below.

Bill black; legs yellowish white (*Jerdon*). Iris umber-brown (*v. Heuglin*).

Length 10; tail 2.5; wing 6.5; tarsus 2.25; bill from gape 1.4.

Distribution. Dry barren tracts of Southern Europe, Northern Africa, and South-western Asia, as far east as Baluchistan, Afghanistan, and North-western India. This species is found in the Punjab, Sind, Rajputana as far east as Ajmir, Jodhpur, and Erinpura, and in Cutch.

Habits, &c. Very similar to those of *C. coromandelicus*. The eggs resemble those of *C. coromandelicus* in number and size, but are much paler, light stone-coloured, thickly, rather finely spotted with brown and pale lilac. It is doubtful whether this bird breeds in India, there being evidently some mistake about the eggs found near Sirsa, and formerly attributed to this species by Hume.

Genus **RHINOPTILUS**, Strickland, 1850.

This is almost entirely an Ethiopian genus, no less than seven species being known from Tropical and Southern Africa, whilst a solitary species, of great rarity, is peculiar to a small portion of the Indian Peninsula. From *Cursorius* the present form is only distinguished by having the bill shorter than the head, straight, and somewhat broader at the base, a rounder wing, with the 2nd and 3rd primaries longest, and a band across the breast; the differences being scarcely of generic value. The eyes are large, and the bird may perhaps have crepuscular habits.

1424. **Rhinoptilus bitorquatus**. *Jerdon's Courser*.

Macrotarsius bitorquatus, *Jerdon*, *Blyth*, *J. A. S. B.* xvii, pt. 1, p. 254 (1848); *id.* *Cat.* p. 260.

Rhinoptilus bitorquatus, *Strickland*, *P. Z. S.* 1850, p. 220; *Jerdon*, *B. I.* iii, p. 628; *Blanford*, *Ibis*, 1867, p. 462; *id.* *J. A. S. B.* xxxviii, pt. 2, p. 190; *Hume*, *Cat.* no. 841; *Sharpe*, *Cat. B. M.* xxiv, p. 50.

Cursorius bitorquatus, Seebohm, *Ibis*, 1886, p. 119; *id. Charadr.* p. 247, pl. xiii.

The Double-banded Plover, Jerdon; *Adava-wuta-titti*, Tel.

Coloration. Crown dark brown, with a buff median band; forehead, lores, and long broad supercilia, passing completely round the nape, white; a brown band streaked with black beneath the eye, extending over the ear-coverts; upper parts brown; wing-coverts slightly paler; across the wing is a broad white band formed of the outer median and the greater coverts; primary-coverts, primaries, and most of the secondaries black, a broad white band crossing obliquely the first two primaries near the end, a large white spot on the 3rd primary and a small round spot on the 4th; inner webs of secondaries chiefly white, and white edgings to the outer webs of the brown tertiaries; upper tail-coverts white; tail blackish brown, the feathers white at the base and with white spots at the tips, the amount of white increasing on the outer feathers; chin and throat buffy white, passing on the fore neck into pale chestnut, followed by two narrow white bands, both dark-edged behind, the posterior in front also; the two divided by a much broader brown gorget; remainder of lower parts creamy white.

Bill blackish at the tips of both mandibles, pale yellow at the base and as far as the nostrils; gape yellow; iris umber-brown; legs pale yellowish white with a fleshy tinge, soles flesh-coloured, nails horny.

Length 10.25; tail 2.5; wing 6.5; tarsus 2.7; bill from gape 1.05.

Distribution. Forest country from the Godávári valley to the neighbourhood of Madras. Jerdon discovered this species near Nellore and Cuddapah, and I met with it close to Sironcha on the Godávári and again near Bhadrachalam, where however it was very far from common. This bird must have a very restricted range, as no other observer is known to have met with it. Neither Jerdon nor Bail saw it in Bastar.

Habits, &c. I first saw three birds together in May 1867; afterwards, in March 1871, I twice found pairs, and I succeeded in each case in shooting one, a male. The birds did not appear on dissection to be breeding. They were in thin forest or high scrub, never in open ground, and I never saw any on hills. Their appearance on the ground is Courser-like, but the flight is more rapid, more like that of *Sarciophorus*. Jerdon states that this bird occasionally utters a plaintive cry. The eggs are unknown.